

JAN 28 2000

DAVID BERENSON: Thank you all for this opportunity for anybody who wants to comment to do so. I, like the previous speaker, didn't come with a prepared statement, just some notes I wrote down based on what I heard today. And so some of them might sound redundant because I'm kind of far down on the list of speakers today. I'll try to be brief. Some of the individuals and groups who may support the transportation plan and the Yucca Mountain plan may sound like they're coming from a position of not in my own back yard. I don't want it stored here so let's find another place, you know, out in the middle of nowhere. But my guess is that they're coming from a no win situation created by, what some previous speakers have been calling, you know, this long time use of an unsafe fuel source that we don't know what to do with the waste. So out of the fear that we have of coming from the effects of the mistakes that have already been made, we have to find something to do with this. So even if we are expressing some support for a plan that's going to find a place to store this, it's out of no other alternative yet.

So my first concern that I'm expressing is that if we do create this, quote, "solution," unquote, out there, you know, in the middle of nowhere, which happens to be native lands, we're perpetuating the lack of local responsibility for our own nuclear waste. And when we do that, we will perpetuate the continued use of nuclear power. I think it's just too easy to slough it off on some other place. Other than financially, of course, because all that I've been hearing today sounds vastly expensive. And this is expensive for a source of power that was originally called too cheap to meter. Well, it's far from it and we Clevelanders are very aware of cost overruns, especially lately. So all the costs from things like all the trucks and the trains, the armed escorts, all the workers that are required every step of the way, all the equipment, all the construction, the casks, all the everything, is amazingly expensive and we need to move away from it. A couple of previous speakers had mentioned we need to get away from your dependence on nuclear power and that's what I'm saying.

As a tax payer and a concerned citizen, we are subsidizing all this, not just through our rates for electrical usage, but through our taxes that are supporting all of the other ways that's subsidized this industry.

I want to comment about a couple of questions that were answered during the question period earlier. One of which was the estimate of the chances of an accident being one to two in 10 million, I believe that was -- what was said. That sounds like a statistic and statistics are usually based on experience. Now does this mean that there have been one or two accidents already in 10 million tries, I doubt it. I think they have, somehow, come up with an estimate and made it sound like a valid statistic. Which concerns me greatly, especially because the difference between one and two in 10 million is a hundred percent difference in a statistic. So where is this estimate from?

And the only other thing I would like to say is, you know, in support of the concern about the nuclear weapons aspect of nuclear power. There was a 60 Minutes special on, I know a few weeks ago, that talked about all the devastating effects on individuals who had to deal with weapons that contained spent fuel. And I think everything we do to support this nuclear industry, will support those unsafe uses as well and I think we need to move towards safer renewable energy sources as quickly as possible before giving us this out from every state that no longer has

to deal with their own problem. Thank you.

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